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THE
VOICE OF REJOICING
IN THE
TABERNACLES
OF THE
RIGHTEOUS.

A SERMON

PREACHED AT YORK, TO A CONGREGATION OF
PROTESTANT DISSENTERS, ON THE 27TH
OF NOVEMBER, 1757, JUST UPON RE-
CEIVING THE ACCOUNT OF THE
KING OF PRUSSIA'S VICTORY,
ON THE FIFTH OF THAT MONTH.

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IF the following harangue should come into the hands of any, but of those to whom it was address'd, let them know that it pretends not either to instruct or to entertain the world. If it breathe the sentiments of piety and patriotism; if it kindled, in a little auditory, a flame like that which gave it birth, it is enough. Its usefulness cannot be great or long. Its seasonableness was its merit. That gave it its effect. It had been well, perhaps, if the importunity of an affectionate people had not drawn it into public: but, since it must, let it, go: the opinion of others may correct their partiality to their preacher, and preserve his heart from any unhappy influence of it.

YORK, Nov. 28,

1757.



PSALM cxviii. 15.

THE VOICE OF REJOICING AND SALVATION IS IN THE TABERNACLES OF THE RIGHTEOUS: THE RIGHT HAND OF THE LORD DOTH VALIANTLY.

TO attend unto the events of Providence: to watch the stream of time, and to observe the changes of its current: to mark it now threatening the desolation of the righteous; again, falling back upon the wicked, and overwhelming them in its impetuosity: seriously to consider the occurrences of life, both in its private and public, in its more contracted and more extensive scenes, is a duty as profitable as

it is binding, and as pleasant as it is profitable. If we neglect it, we lose the noblest entertainment of the human understanding; we slight the best friend of virtue; we despise the most faithful advocate of God.

It is Providence, that presents to us the most astonishing, the grandest and the fairest views of the divine perfections. It is Providence, that pleads, with most powerful persuasion, the cause of virtue and religion. It is Providence, that enlivens us in the praise of God, that banishes all fear from our love of him, and all doubt from our confidence in his government. The giddy overlook her: the busy are deaf unto

her voice. Happy he, who sometimes retiring from the throng and the noise of life, stands as it were at a distance, an undisturbed spectator of its events. He sees the hand of God moving and directing the vast machine. He hears the voice of Providence, like that which John in vision heard, as the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, 'Alleluia, for the Lord God all-mighty and all-gracious reigneth.'

To rejoice with them that do rejoice, is a precept of the gospel. To rejoice with the righteous in their salvation, is a duty of peculiar obligation. To be insensible

when the innocent are oppressed; to be insensible when the malice of their oppressors is defeated: to be unmoved when ambition lifts her sword against liberty and religion; to be unmoved when liberty and religion see ambition humbled in the dust, bespeaks a heart lost to every sentiment of virtue. While, therefore, the voice of rejoicing and salvation is sounding through the tents of the righteous; let us join in the song of triumph, and repeat the solemn acclamation.

To see the works of God and not adore him: to hear of his mighty deeds and not give thanks unto him, bespeaks a heart lost to every sentiment of piety. We are

bound to rejoice in the Lord at all times: his praise should continually be in our mouths. More especially, while our allies make their boast in God, when we hear thereof, we should be glad. Let us then magnify the Lord with them, let us exalt his name together. The right hand of the Lord doth valiantly: let our souls do piously, and make his praise to be glorious.

I need not, my brethren, relate to you the occasion of this address. You all know a great and good King, connected with our country, by the bonds of blood and interest; united with her, in the closer and more sacred ties of one common cause, the cause

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of truth and justice, of liberty and virtue, of religion and of God; you all know a great and good King, on whom Providence lately seem'd to frown; for whom, not long ago, we trembled lest he should fall a sacrifice to the unprovoked malice of nations that had leagued themselves against him; for him, hath the Lord made bare his arm; God's right hand hath gotten him the victory.

Clouds and darkness did indeed surround him, but it was only to prove his virtue; it was only to enhance his glory. In the midst of his distress he stay'd himself on God. Faith sustain'd the sinking monarch. He had never

seen the righteous forsaken: tho' he fell, he trusted he shou'd not utterly be cast down, and the Lord upheld him with his hand. Great in conscious goodness, his cause he commended unto him who judgeth righteously: it was in the name of God he set up his banners, and God hath crowned him with victory.

A victory more glorious the sun never saw. A victory more important the sword never gain'd. A deliverance more seasonable the Almighty never sent. It is a victory, in which all the freeborn peoples, of the European world at least, are interested: in which we, as Britons and as Protestants, are peculiarly interested. Give me

leave, therefore, my brethren, first to congratulate you on the prosperous event; and next to remind you of the tribute which it demands for him, who is the Author of salvation, who giveth victory to kings.

To assist you in discharging this debt of gratitude and praise, let me dwell a little on those circumstances of the victory which I have already mention'd. While we muse upon them, the fires of devotion will be kindling: convinc'd that it is the Lord's doing, it will be marvellous in our eyes.

In the first place, the victory was great and glorious. Every circumstance that can magnify or signalize a victory, attended to ex-

alt it. Where the cause is unjust, success is infamy. In the cause of tyranny, to conquer is to murder. In the cause of superstition, to fight is to persecute. Let Alexanders, Caesars, Czarinas, Heads of the Holy Empire, and Kings most Christian, let these boast that they are the butcherers of the world. Be it their honour, to sacrifice their thousands to tyranny and superstition. Prussia's was the cause of liberty and truth. It was no furious zeal to extirpate heresy: it was no lawless pride to extend his empire: it was injury that drew his sword: it was patriotism that rous'd his indignation. The rulers of the earth had conspir'd to divest him of his proper-

ty, and to enslave his subjects: they were forging chains for the sons of freedom; they were preparing miseries for the adherents of religion. God, who sees in secret, revealed to him their hidden machinations: he bad him show himself the father of his people, the protector of their property, the assertor of their privileges, the champion of universal liberty, and the defender of the Christian faith. He heard the call, and he obeyed it. These were the motives that armed the pacific hero: motives, which at once justify his conduct, and shed a lustre round his character. In such a cause, it is glorious to conquer, for in such a cause it is glorious to die. To

check the rage of superstition:
to curb the insolence of tyranny:
to defend mankind from their
baleful influence and miserable
bondage, is a god-like undertak-
ing; it becomes the regal office;
it does honour to the royal name.
Such was the cause of Prussia, ne-
cessary, equitable, glorious.

His cause then was the cause of
Heaven: his spirit also was divine.
Guilt is cowardice. Innocence is
courage. The wicked flee when
no man pursueth; but the righ-
teous is bold as a lion. What was
it, envied prince, that inspir'd thy
few battalions? of what were ye
afraid, ye swarming nations? why
did ye not overwhelm the afflic-
ted hero? why did ye not devour

the devoted prey? is it true, proud Gaul, that one has chas'd a thousand, and two put ten thousand of thy warriors to flight? are these thy chosen leaders? are these thy boasted legions? ah, how vain are the imaginations that oppose themselves to God! who ever hath exalted himself against him and prosper'd?

The monarch saw the myriads of the enemy: he look'd up on his own little host: but he knew the power of the Almighty, and with unshaken resolution led them to the combat. Were they men, or inspired by thee, thou God of battles, were they more than men, that began the onset? Religion march'd before the van

with indignant look, she frown'd
upon their foes, and the light-
ning of her eyes dismay'd them.
Liberty, flew along the ranks,
and inflam'd the zeal of her a-
vengers. God, thunder'd thro'
the embattled squadrons, and
their enemies lay vanquish'd at
their feet.

Their counsels were infatuat-
ed; their courage was intimidat-
ed; their power was enervated.
That army, which in the morn-
ing rival'd the drops of the dew,
and vaunted in its prowess; be-
fore evening, that army, was cut
down and scattered. Great was
the conquest and cheap the price
of it. The God, who gave
strength unto their arms, cover-

ed the heads of the assailants: beneath the shadow of his wings they fought in safety. Like destroying angels, they were intrepid and invulnerable. Thousands fell before them: thousands fled to the right hand and to the left: they neither fell nor fear'd. The victorious prince beheld his conquest: he ascribed the victory to God. 'The Lord, said he, is my strength and my song, and is become my salvation.'

Germany never wonder'd at so miraculous an event. Neither Marlborough, nor Alexander, ever fought so glorious a battle. Neither Danube, nor the Granicus, ever witness'd so astonishing a victory. All nations compassed

him about; but in the name of God did he destroy them.

Again, in the second place, this victory, so great and glorious, was also of the last importance. In our views, the fate of Europe depended on the stroke. Britain, who had hitherto been the patroness of liberty, the defendress of religion, the arbitress of the West: who had once held the scales of empire, and given law to contending nations: who had once ruled supreme upon the Ocean: who had once been the favourite of heaven, Britain, was now sunk into supineness, sensuality, and cowardice; torn by intestine factions; enfeebled by external losses; despised by the people which

had trembled at her name; and
 forsaken by the God who had
 loved her interests. Her king, the
 idol of his subjects, and once the
 terror of his enemies, age had in-
 capacitated for the field; her
 councils were divided; her mi-
 nisters were ambitious; her patri-
 ots were luxurious; her warriors
 were effeminate; her nobles were
 degenerate; her commons were
 turbulent, licentious, and pro-
 fane. Liberty and religion could
 no more confide in Britain, as
 their bulwark: on the arm of
 Prussia did they lean: with him
 they stood or fell. This was the
 last effort of his struggling power.
 Had it not been seconded by Go-
 tyranny had found no more o

struction to her progress: she would quickly have subdued all things to herself. Liberty had soon been swallow'd up, and religion could not have surviv'd her friend. So important was the issue of the day. Distant nations were interested in the battle. The fate of unborn myriads depended on it. Blessed, thrice blessed be our God, that the cause of freedom triumph'd. Let religion show forth his salvation day by day.

The same circumstances, that evince the importance of the victory, declare it also to be seasonable. Just at the time when the exulting heathen were crying, 'Where is now their God?' Just

at the time when his distressed people were crying, ' Lord save us or we perish.' Just at the time when the storm, which had long harra's'd the much injur'd prince was again collected; when it was pointing on him all its thunder; the Lord repell'd the fury of the storm, brought forth the righteousness of his king out of the darkness that encompassed it, and show'd his glory like the noon-day sun.

Happy Prince, who hath the Lord for his God. With this ally, fear not the confederate nations. Soon shall they confess the honours of thy name; soon shall they tremble at the terrors of thine arms. They shall bow be-

fore thy feet, and own that they were fighting against God.

Happy Britain, if not unworthy of the blessing, happy, that thou hast this consolation of thy sorrows; happy, that thou hast this omen of thy salvation. It is true, the God, who was wont to clothe thine armies with majesty, and thy fleets with terror: the God, who once rejoiced over thee to do thee good, no more delights in thee: he clothes thy fleets with ignominy, and thine armies with confusion. Ah, Britain, God has left thee. But, in wrath he remembers mercy: he is not gone over to thine enemies: to the camp of thine ally is he retired. Thy cause shall triumph;

but thy gory shall be turned into shame. Prussia shall fight the battles of the Lord: truth and liberty shall still dwell within thy borders, but the honours of the deliverance shall be his. Rejoice, O Britain, in this earnest of thy salvation. From the depths of their distress, let the people with their King shout aloud for joy!

Just when the Father of our country was bewailing the oppression of one happy people, and trembling for the liberties of another: When his own strength fail'd, and his ministers forsook him, and his generals dishonor'd him: Providence reviv'd the drooping monarch. A Prince of his own line she animated to fight, that

cause himself had so often fought,
and she crown'd his courage with
success.

'Look, said she, to that rising
'Hero: his beams shall cheer thy
'declining life: the hope his vir-
'tues will inspire shall sweeten thy
'remaining days. Well hast thou
'fought my battles. Well hast
'thou approv'd thyself my Mi-
'nister. The world must lose thy
'person, but they shall not lose
'thy spirit; that rising Hero shall
'inherit it.'

With joy, the Monarch listen'd
to the voice of Providence: his
aged bosom panted with unusual
ardors, "Then, said he, I die in
peace: thine, O God, be the
glory and the victory, and let

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‘all my people reply, Amen.’

Amen, will we reply with sincerest hearts. For thy sake, gracious King, we will not cease to pray, ‘Prosperity be with the arms of Prussia, and peace be within thy palaces.’

Just at the time when Britain was adoring the God of her salvation: just at the time when she was commemorating his works of old, praising him for the repeated wonders he had wrought, in defence of her, her liberties and religion: just when the name of William and of God was echoing thro’ the coasts of Britain then was the sword of the Lord and of Prussia chastising her avowed enemies. Be that day * for ever

* The Fifth of November.

ever sacred: let the British annals
mark it for their own: let all the
sons of liberty unite to celebrate
it: let the traitor and the tyrant
tremble at its return.

Thus seasonable, thus impor-
tant, thus glorious, was the vic-
tory. Review the scene: then
doubt whether it was the Lord
that avenged our injuries; if ye
cannot doubt it, praise ye the
Lord.

The first tribute must be paid
to God: But let us not forget
of the Minister of his grace. When
Israel triumph'd over the Midia-
nites, the cry was, 'The sword of
the Lord and of Gideon.' Prussia
is the favourite of Heaven, and
Heaven cannot err. God approves

and honors him; men, therefore, should esteem and bless him. Is there not, O God? yes, sure there is, some chosen mansion, some mansion of peculiar happiness and glory, for the patrons, the guardians, the assertors of thy cause? Yes, worthy Prince, thy future crown shall shine with uncommon splendor. Unrival'd honors shall distinguish thee. Liberty and religion shall contend in blessing thee. The present age shall wonder at thy greatness: posterity shall justify their admiration. The glories of thy character shall dazzle the remotest generations. In thee shall the remotest generations of the world be blessed. Thine example shall give other heroes

unto other ages. Through thine example, unborn Princes shall be great and good.

Long may he live, kind Heaven. Be his person sacred. Be his armies terrible: Be their labours few: Be their battles prosperous. May his allies be faithful: may his enemies be confounded, their ambition humbled, their power broken: Still, let thy counsels guide him: Still, let thine angels guard him: Still, may he proceed victorious and triumphant, till that happy day arrive, when the tumults of Europe shall subside; till that wish'd-for period be come, when the Lord will bless his people with peace.

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